

# **USUHS Department of Surgery Academic Promotions: Suggestions and General Information**

**18 June 2003**

## **Purpose**

The document is intended to assist candidates preparing for academic promotion. It provides guidelines, suggestions and general information and should not be interpreted as Department or University policy. The University promotions policy is available on the USUHS website, <http://www.usuhs.mil> ; Instruction 1100. ( <http://www.usuhs.mil/handbook/criteria.htm> ) ( <http://www.usuhs.mil/handbook/enclosure3c.htm#attach1> )

## **Candidate Expectation**

Promotion is a significant and meaningful achievement within academia. Candidates seeking promotion should involve themselves in appropriate academic activities for several years in preparation for academic promotion and view promotion as a process, rather than an administrative step.

Academic promotion is conferred after a candidate demonstrates substantial scholarship as well as academic service to the USUHS School of Medicine community. Contributions to GME and administrative service in the clinical centers are recognized in the promotions process, however, contributions, service and scholarship at USUHS SOM are key factors in promotion.

Based on the particular “track” selected for promotion, requirements vary. The requirements are outlined in detail in USUHS Instruction 1100. Previous candidates from the Department have requested additional guidance regarding "criteria" for promotion after reading this document. Academic promotion is not something for which strict "criteria" is available, or appropriate. However, to assist applicants in preparing for promotion, guidance is provided below.

## **Promotion Process**

The Department Chairperson identifies prospective candidates for promotion. Individuals interested in academic promotion are advised to contact the Department Chairperson via e-mail ([dburris@usuhs.mil](mailto:dburris@usuhs.mil)), request a credentials review and forward an electronic version of their c.v. for this purpose. The Chairperson will forward the interested individual's c.v. to the Chairman of the Department's Internal Promotions Committee for an initial screening. Following this review, the Department Chairperson will decide if promotion is indicated and contact the candidate via e-mail. The Chairperson may elect to counsel and mentor the candidate to prepare his/her portfolio for advancement to the University committee. In some cases preparation for promotion can take place over a period of a few months, however, in many cases this can take several months and even one to two years. If the Chairperson decides that the individual is a good candidate at that time, the candidate will be contacted and will begin to prepare his/her packet with the Department's Promotions Coordinator. When the packet is complete, it is advanced to the Department of Surgery Internal Promotions Committee. The Internal Promotions Committee reviews the candidate's promotion materials and advises the Chairman on the likelihood of a favorable response by the University Promotions Committee. The Internal Promotions Committee can recommend to the Chairperson that the candidate is ready for advancement, or identify areas to strengthen prior to sending before the full University committee, which is called the CAPT (Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure). Based on the recommendation of the Department's Internal Promotions Committee, the Chairman will give his final recommendation for promotion. If the Chairperson recommends promotion at that time, the promotions materials are forwarded to the CAPT with the Chairperson's recommendation. The Chairperson does not “promote” a candidate rather makes a recommendation to the CAPT.

The CAPT meets four times a year. Promotion packets must be completed well in advance of each meeting to allow duplication and distribution of packets to the CAPT committee members. CAPT members review candidate's materials prior to the meeting. Each candidate is discussed in detail and a vote is taken regarding academic advancement. Three outcomes are possible:

- a. The CAPT can recommend to the Dean of the School of Medicine that a candidate be promoted.
- b. The CAPT can recommend against a promotion.
- c. The CAPT can recommend a candidate be “deferred”. Often deferred candidates are worthy of promotion but additional items are required or important questions must be addressed or clarified before the CAPT can vote on an applicant.

It is important to note that the CAPT does not “promote” candidates but rather makes a recommendation to the Dean of the School of Medicine. The Dean can accept or reject the CAPT recommendation. Candidates approved by the Dean are then forwarded to the Board of Regents of USUHS. Promotions and academic appointments only occur after approved/endorsed by the Board of Regents.

To assist department faculty in preparing for academic promotion, an outline or profile of a candidates from our department that have been successful in obtaining promotion in the past is provided below. Typically our candidates apply within the Clinician-Educator "track" for advancement. We present below an outline of qualifications of previously successful candidates in this track but also provide information about successful individuals in the "research tract". We think it is instructive for our candidates to understand the requirements for scientists as this helps put the requirements for clinicians in perspective.

#### **Associate Professor:**

Successful candidates for Associate Professor typically have:

- been “in grade” as an Assistant Professor at least 4-5 years
- Demonstrated significant scholarship as evidenced by approximately 15-20 peer-reviewed articles. Candidates typically have appropriately 10 additional non-peer reviewed, invited articles, book chapters or monographs
- demonstrates that they have established themselves as a local or regional expert and are well on their way to establishing themselves as a national expert in their field. This should be evident from letters of recommendation, regional and national awards, invited lectures, additional board positions, national professional committee participation and grant acquisition.
- Candidates for “Research” track typically demonstrate innovation and acceptance of their scientific discoveries and work through publication of in highly regarded journals; (i.e. high impact score journals). Research candidates should be able to demonstrate substantial ability to acquire major funding. Typically candidates have > 1 major grant or RO1 grant. Additionally, research candidates to the Associate Professor level typically demonstrate their ability to support and mentor graduate students in research.
- Successful candidates in the “Clinician Educator” tract typically demonstrate outstanding clinical abilities in their specialty practice. They typically publish clinical research and clinical series/reviews in their specialty journals. Journal impact score criteria and grant acquisition criteria used for research tract individuals are not applied to candidates in the Clinician Educator tract. However, successful candidates in the Clinician Educator tract instead are able to demonstrate their teaching achievements and contributions. For some candidates multiple teaching awards evidence this. For others a teaching portfolio constructed within their C.V., can demonstrate teaching achievements and contributions. A sample-teaching portfolio is available on request from the Department of Surgery. Clinician Educators are directed to USUHS Instruction 1100 to become familiar with the different teaching levels. (continued next page)

It is helpful if candidate present their teaching accomplishments in a manner that highlights the levels at which they teach. Faculty must provide evidence of developing and subsequently achieving teaching skill at Level Two prior to being considered for promotion.

- Successful “Clinician Investigator” tract applicants have demonstrated excellent clinical abilities along with outstanding research achievement.
- Early promotion to the senior rank of associate professor is rare and signals significant and noteworthy accomplishment, as well as unusual potential, that far exceed the threshold requirements.

### **Professor:**

Promotion to the rank of Professor is the highest academic recognition of the SOM and is reserved for those members of the faculty who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in the spectrum of scholarship. It is not based on length of service or time in rank. Promotion to the rank of Professor will be granted in recognition of distinctive achievements and will be reserved for our most distinguished faculty.

Successful candidates for Professor typically have:

- been “in grade” as an Associate Professor at least 4-5 years
- Demonstrated significant scholarship as evidenced by approximately 50 peer-reviewed articles. Candidates typically have appropriately 10 additional non-peer reviewed, invited articles, book chapters or monographs
- demonstrates that they have established themselves as a regional and national expert in their field. This should be evident from letters of recommendation, regional and national awards, invited lectures, additional board positions, national professional committee participation and grant acquisition.
- Candidates for “Research” tract typically demonstrate innovation and acceptance of their scientific discoveries and work through publication of in highly regarded journals; (i.e. high impact score journals). Research candidates should be able to demonstrate substantial ability to acquire major funding. Typically, candidates have a history of holding several major grants such as the RO1 grants. Additionally, research candidates to the Professor level typically demonstrate their ability to support and mentor graduate students in research.
- Successful candidates in the “Clinician Educator” tract typically demonstrate outstanding clinical abilities in their specialty practice. They typically publish clinical research and clinical series/reviews in their specialty journals. Journal impact score criteria and grant acquisition criteria used for research tract individuals are not applied to candidates in the Clinician Educator tract. However, successful candidates in the Clinician Educator tract instead are able to demonstrate their teaching achievements and contributions. For some candidates this is evidenced by multiple teaching awards. For others a teaching portfolio constructed within their C.V., can demonstrate teaching achievements and contributions. A sample-teaching portfolio is available on request from the Department of Surgery. Clinician Educators are directed to USUHS Instruction 1100 to become familiar with the different teaching levels.
- Successful “Clinician Investigator” tract applicants have demonstrated excellent clinical abilities along with outstanding research achievement.

**Note:** The above descriptions provide general background and qualifications of successful candidates and should not be viewed as strict criteria. Candidates will notice that Instruction 1100 provides "minimum" criteria. We provide a description of successful candidates so that prospective applicants can have a more realistic approach to promotion. (continued next page)

The above profiles of our previous successful candidates provide numbers for various achievements such as publications or grants to help candidates prepare for promotion. Candidates should not interpret these numbers in a "concrete" fashion. For example, a candidate shouldn't necessarily "expect" promotion to Associate Professor if they have 20 publications. The University Committee on Appointments, Promotion and Tenure will certainly look favorably on this number of publications but it is only one of several areas reviewed and considered by the committee. Again, the numbers provided in the profiles above are general information and should not be used or interpreted as binding or as department policy.

The candidates application packet is developed with the Chairperson of Surgery and Chief of specialty service, and defines the activities the candidate undertakes which contributes to the academic mission of USUHS and its affiliated clinical centers. Although content understandably is shaped by unexpected opportunities, the goals, direction and accomplishments should be a matter of active intent. The promotions process is based on recognition of excellence, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

### **Assistant Professor**

Appointment or promotion to Assistant Professor is based on the recommendation of the Department Chairperson to the Dean of the School of Medicine and the Board of Regents. The CAPT is not involved in these appointments. The basic requirements are Board Certification from an accredited ACGME surgical specialty, and good professional standing. Individuals at local military teaching hospital require a letter of recommendation from their commanding officer. The administrative aspects of this appointment can be address through our department promotions coordinator.